

March 4, 2007

Dear Legislators,

My name is Tawnia Eastman and I am a single mother with three children. Ava , who is almost 3 years old, has severe neurological problems and is on daily meds for seizures. She cannot walk, crawl, or speak yet. She receives physical therapy and speech therapy. Jeyden age 6 is ADHD. Boston age 10 is autistic and in special classes at public school. I cannot be here in person to speak to you but if I could here is what I'd say.

As I see it I have two options to take care of myself and my family. One option is to continue to work at a fast food place as I have for the past 8 years, go to college, and with state paid child care have my children in child care or after school care. The other option is to quit college, work at a low paying job, receive welfare, and find friends, family or neighbors who could watch my children cheaply while I work.

My desire is to receive an education with the hopes of bettering myself so that in the future I can provide for my family by having the skills to succeed at a higher paying job. Before I had state assistance for child care it was very stressful for me. I could not work as much and I was not able to go to college. Finding child care was hard and inconsistent. Now that I am receiving state assistance for child care I can have the children cared for on a consistent basis and I am very pleased with the quality of care my children get.

I do not like to feel that I must always prove that I am worthy enough or poor enough to get funding. I sincerely want to be proud of myself by being self-sufficient in providing for my family and I believe the only way I can do that is to stay in college. State paid assistance for quality child care allows me to do that.

Thank you for paying attention to my situation and I hope I can help my family and others like mine strive to do something better for themselves instead of giving up or worse yet finding answers in drugs and alcohol.

Sincerely,

Tawnia Eastman

